

North Carolina Agriculture Cost Share Program Review Summary  
(December, 2016)

County	Burke	Date of Previous Review/Report	2013
District Staff Name(s)	Lea Ann Branch, Travis Smith	Date	12/14/2016
NRCS Staff Name(s)	William Faulkner		
Division Representative(s)	Ken Parks, Rob Baldwin		
Additional Participants			

Questions	Division Findings				Division Comments	District Plan of Action Required		SWCD Plan of Action	Proposed Timeline for Implementation	Division Response to Plan of Action (date)
	Commendation	Recommendation	Corrective Action	No Concerns/ Not Applicable		Yes	No			
Section 1: Application Procedures and Tracking Progress (BMP Implementation and Payments) Questions in this section focus on how the district advertises the program, how applications are developed, how contracts are developed, how funds are tracked and how the board approves each.										
How/when are the district board meetings scheduled?				X	The district board meets the 1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday of every month at 8:30 a.m. The meeting is regularly scheduled.		X			
How do you notify the public of the board meeting schedule? Does it adhere to the Open Meetings Law?				X	Postings are on the bulletin board at the office, the local post office and on the district’s website page.		X			

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<i>Please describe the district's process for providing assistance to applicants by assessing resource concerns to determine if a BMP is "needed and feasible" and then developing the conservation plan.</i>				X	The district technician listens to the concerns of the applicant and then tells them to fill out an application and then does a site visit on the farm while taking conservation notes and assessing what BMPs are needed. The technician also describes the cost share program contracting process.		X			
<i>In what instances does the district provide technical assistance without cost share funds?</i>				X	The technician sets up a site visit to offer technical assistance. Some of the past help has been with sinkholes and erosion issues on residential property.		X			
<i>Are applications reviewed and approved by the Board as a separate action item?</i>				X	Yes.		X			
<i>Are application motions/decisions recorded in the board minutes?</i>				X	Yes.		X			

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Applicants are limited when applying for incentive BMPs. How does your district track applicants so they do not go over the practice caps and to be sure they haven't already "adopted" the practice?  Is your district using the self-certification for incentives form provided by the division?				X	The district does not do any incentive BMPs, but is aware of the incentive self-certification form that is required in CS2.		X			
If multiple partners farm together, how does the district track individual applicants as one operation or entity?				X	N/A – Look at streambank work with contiguous farms with Burke and McDowell Districts.		X			
At what point in the application process does the district develop the contract? Describe this process.				X	After the application is ranked the technician goes over the contract with the applicant and see if he/she wants to continue with the contract.		X			
Describe how the district reviews the contract with the applicant. Do you explain that work cannot begin until the contract is approved by the division?				X	The technician goes over the contract process and explains work cannot be started until the board and division approves the contract. The technician		X			

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					has a pre-construction meeting before each project gets started.					
Describe the district/board’s procedure for approving supervisor contracts.				X	The district has not had any supervisor contracts, but know the supervisor contract policy and procedure.		X			
<i>Are contracts reviewed and approved by the Board as a separate action item?</i>	X				Yes.		X			
<i>Are contract motions/decisions recorded in the board minutes?</i>	X				Yes, looked good.					
<i>Is it documented in the Board minutes that the supervisor abstained from discussing his/her own contract and from voting?</i>				X	N/A – The district has not had any supervisor contracts.					
What procedures do you follow for notifying the applicant that work can begin?	X				The technician waits for the division approval email and then meets with the farmer on a pre-construction meeting and goes over when work can begin and goes over the NRCS standards and specs. of the BMP.		X			
What information do you provide the applicant?	X				The technician makes copies of the 6-part folder and all the documentation is provided to them.		X			

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What technical assistance do you provide during the BMP installation process to ensure the BMP is installed correctly and by the contract deadline?				X	The technician does site visits to assist in the installation of the BMP. The engineer or NRCS staff meets with him also. The technician works with the applicant to ensure the BMP goes in by the contract deadline.		X			
How do you track the Commission’s interim performance milestone? One-third of the work must be completed within 12 months of division approval.				X	The technician keeps track of the installation and the 1/3 <sup>rd</sup> rule on a spreadsheet.		X			
If 1/3 of the work has not been completed within 12 months and the cooperators requests additional time, is the district recording 6-month extensions in the board minutes?				X	Yes. It is documented in the board minutes.		X			

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What documentation do you include in the contract file that certifies that the BMP was inspected and is installed to the standards and specifications?				X	The technician has a JAA letter from the engineer that certifies installation followed NRCS standard and specs. Non-engineering BMPs are inspected by the technician with proper JAA and takes before and after pictures.		X			
Are BMPs measured then certified before the request for payment is approved? How is this documented?				X	Yes. It is documented on the “as-built conservation maps.		X			
Are receipts received and reviewed for CSP BMPs that are based on actual cost?				X	Yes.		X			
Are request for payments reviewed and approved by the board as a separate action item?	X				Yes.		X			
Are payment motions/decisions recorded in the board minutes?				X	Yes.		X			
<b>Section 2: Spot Checks and Compliance Issues</b> Questions in this section focus on how the district reviews BMPs for compliance and how maintenance and/or non-compliance issues are addressed.										

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Who participates in annual spot checks? When are they conducted?				X	There a 3 to 4 supervisors that participate in the spotchecks along with the technician and NRCS DC. These are usually done in May.		X			
How does the district randomly select which contracts to spot check?				X	The technician has a spreadsheet with the active contracts and then goes to another staff member to pick a random number.		X			
Are all BMPs under the waste management category spot checked for the first five years after installation? This applies to all farms that fall under the thresholds that are regulated by DWR.				X	Yes.		X			
Are all agriculture new ponds, pond repair/retrofits, and water collection systems being spot-checked every year during the maintenance period?				X	Yes.		X			
Are all agriculture road repair/stabilizations being spot-checked at least every 2 years during the maintenance period?				X	N/A		X			


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How does the district notify the NRCS area office (for ACSP contracts) or division (for CCAP contracts) to conduct spot checks on lands owned or operated by a district, county, division or NRCS employee or district supervisor? This includes CPOs, revisions, supplements or repairs.				X	The district does not have any of these, but knows the notification process.		X			





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The North Carolina Statute 02 NCAC 59D.0107(f) states "If the technical representative of the district determines that a BMP for which program funds were received has been destroyed or has not been properly maintained, the applicant will be notified that the BMP must be repaired or re-implemented within 30 working days. For vegetative practices, applicants are given one calendar year to re-establish the vegetation."  How does your district notify individuals that have destroyed or mismanaged a BMP?	X				The district notifies the applicant with a phone call and letter that the BMP is out of compliance.		X			
How are supervisors notified of BMPs that are found to be destroyed or mismanaged at any time throughout the year?	X				The supervisors are given a copy of the non-compliance letter for board approval.		X			
Does the district provide a written notice that the BMP must be repaired or re-implemented within 30 working days? (Vegetative practices have to be reestablished within one calendar year.) Is a copy of the notification kept in the contract file?				X	Yes, looked good.		X			
If the BMP was not repaired or re-implemented, was repayment requested? Please provide documentation.				X	N/A – The district has not had one of these to repay.		X			
Is the district notifying the division of non-compliance and resolutions?				X	Yes.		X			
<b>Section 3: Record Keeping</b> Questions in this section focus on how funds are managed and accounted for, maintaining proper design and job approval authority, as well as disclosure forms.										

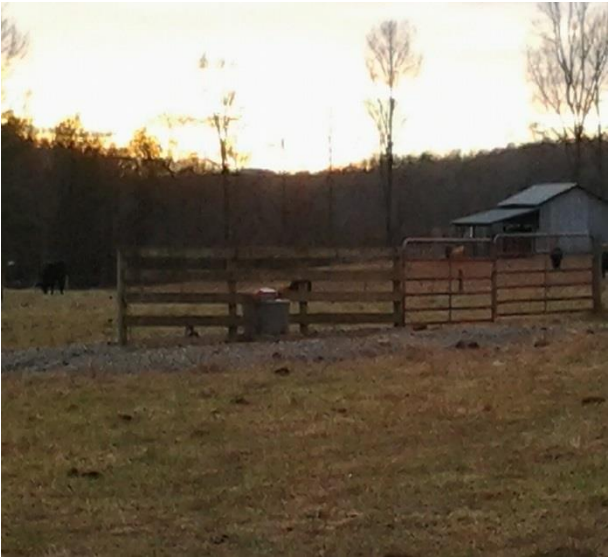
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How does the district track BMP funds?				X	The technician uses an Excel spreadsheet to track the cost share BMP funds and progress.		X			
In what instances does the district use the division on-line (website & CS²) reports?				X	Yes.		X			
How are technical assistance and operating funds tracked? Are they audited? What is the date of the last audit? Who performed the audit?				X	All of these are tracked through the county finance dept. The annual audit was last done in June and it was done by Lowdermilk, Church and Co.		X			
Who in the office is funded by Cost Share Technical Assistance (TA) from the State?				X	Travis Smith		X			
How are matching funds tracked? Are they audited? What is the date of the last audit? Who performed the audit?				X	All these are tracked by the county finance.		X			

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Is proper job approval authority (JAA) documented for each technical and cost share position? Please provide a copy of the latest approved JAA.		X			The technician does not have any JAA, but is working on obtaining JAA. Recommend to refer to the professional development link on the division website to follow the process of obtaining JAA and utilize the NRCS DC for assistance.	X		Technician will be applying for JAA for water tanks, well, and fencing by the end of the year.	By the end of the year.	Plan of action accepted.


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<b>Section 4: Contract Reviews and Site Visits</b> Below is a list of the contracts the division reviewed. Spot checks were also conducted. Notes include recommendations and/or corrective action for contract files as well as the BMP. Contracts/BMPs are listed by contract number.										
Contract Number: 12-2008-503 Applicant Name: Morganton Parks and Recreation BMP: Cistern (CCAP) 				X	The BMP was functioning properly and looked good.  The documentation in the filed looked good except a missing ranking form and benchmark measure. *		X			

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Contract Number: 12-2009-025 Applicant Name: John Abernethy BMP: Pond Sediment Removal (Drought Grant)  				X	The BMP was functioning properly and looked good.  The documentation looked good except for a missing conservation plan. *		X			

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<div>Contract Number: 12-2008-008</div> <div>Applicant Name: Tommy Woody</div> <div>BMP: Ag. Chemical Storage Building</div> <div></div>				X	<div>The BMP was functioning properly and looked good.</div> <div>The documentation looked good except for a missing conservation plan. *</div>		X			

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Contract Number: 12-200-011 Applicant Name: Morden Dean Icard BMP: Fencing, Watering Tanks, Well and Pasture Renovation  				X	The BMP was functioning properly and looked good.  The documentation looked good except for missing field notes. *		X			



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<div>Contract Number: 12-2011-018</div> <div>Applicant Name: Larry Buff</div> <div>BMP: Fencing, Watering Tanks, Well, Stream Crossing and Critical Area Planting</div> <div></div>				X	<div>The BMP was functioning properly and looked good.</div> <div>All documentation in the file looked good.</div>		X			

**\*Field Portion Comments:** There is a general recommendation to include all proper documentation in the contract files. Some contract files were missing various documentation.